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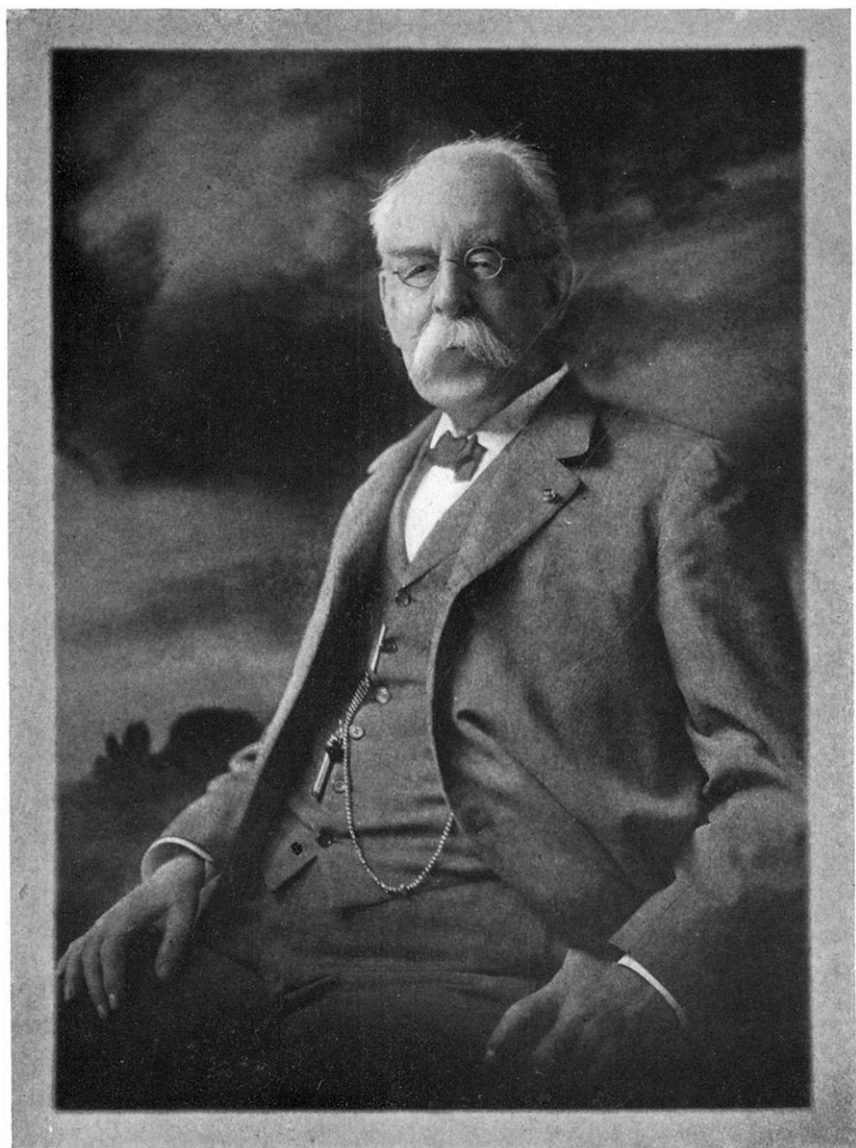
## CHARLES PICKERING BOWDITCH

AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGY has lost one of its greatest patrons in the death of Charles P. Bowditch, which occurred on June 1, 1921. He was born in Boston, September 30, 1842, the son of Jonathan Ingersoll Bowditch and Lucy O. Nichols and the grandson of Nathaniel Bowditch. He received the A.B. degree from Harvard College in 1863 and the A.M. degree three years later. He married Cornelia L. Rockwell on June 7, 1866. She and four children survive him. He served in the Civil War as 2d Lieutenant, 1st Lieutenant, and Captain of the 55th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry and as Captain of the 5th Massachusetts Volunteer Cavalry.

Mr. Bowditch was a man of broad interests as his membership in various learned societies shows. He was elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1892 and was its Treasurer from 1905 to 1915 and President from 1917 to 1919. He was also a member of the Boston Society of Natural History, the American Antiquarian Society, and the American Geographical Society. His anthropological interests appear in his membership in the following societies: American Anthropological Association, American Association for the Advancement of Science, Archaeological Institute of America, International Congress of Americanists, and the Société des Américanistes de Paris. His historical-genealogical interests are shown in his membership in the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Bostonian Society, the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, and the New England Historical-Genealogical Society. He was the author of the Pickering Genealogy.

For many years he took a keen delight in the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy and was the author of *Bacon's Connection with the First Folio of Shakespeare*.

As a man of affairs in Boston, Mr. Bowditch was an officer in many corporations and numerous benevolent enterprises. His



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list of charities was a long one. He was the author of the *History of the Trustees of the Charity of Edward Hopkins*.

After a pleasure trip to southern Mexico and Yucatan, in 1888, Mr. Bowditch's main interest, outside that of his business as trustee, became centered in Maya antiquities. This enthusiasm for a region up to that time neglected and practically unknown resulted in establishing an entirely new field in American Anthropology.

Mr. Bowditch's connection with the Peabody Museum of Harvard University was a long and a close one. From 1888, when the records show he presented his first gift to the Museum, up to the time of his death, he was its greatest benefactor. In 1894 he was elected a trustee of the Museum and he served on the Faculty of this institution continuously from that time onward, rarely missing a meeting and always taking a most active part in the deliberations of that body.

In 1891 the Museum sent its first expedition to Central America. With the exception of only a few years this expedition has been an annual occurrence up to the present time. Mr. Bowditch planned and provided for these trips with little outside aid. The early work of Gordon, Saville, and Owens in Copan and the Uloa Valley, the discoveries of Maler on the Usumacinta River and Peten, the long continued investigations of Thompson in Yucatan and especially in the Cenote of Chichen Itza, the expeditions of Tozzer, Merwin, and Hay in British Honduras and northern Guatemala, of Lothrop in Honduras, the second expedition of Morley in Yucatan, and the work of Spinden in southern Yucatan are the most important activities in this line. A very large number of hitherto unknown ruined sites were disclosed and a numerous addition to the wealth of hieroglyphic inscriptions resulted.

There is hardly a man now working in the Central American field today who was not directly beholden at some time in his career to Mr. Bowditch for encouragement and aid.

His interest in sending out expedition after expedition has resulted in a large accession to the collections of the Museum. Among the most important of these are: the large number of original stone carvings from Copan as the result of a concession from Honduras

in 1891 and continuing for ten years, molds and casts of the principal stelae and altars from Copan and Quirigua, lintels and stelae from Yaxchilan and Piedras Negras, and many of the sculptured stones from Chichen Itza, collections of pottery and other objects from the Uloa Valley and Copan, from Holmul, and from many of the ruins of Yucatan. Second to none is the unparalleled collection from the Sacred Cenote of Chichen Itza. This work was planned and financed almost entirely by Mr. Bowditch. The magnitude of these collections can be seen from the fact that they now fill at least three-fourths of two large halls given over to Mexico and Central America.

Mr. Bowditch's one aim was the advance of knowledge of the Maya field and he always laid stress on this rather than on the acquisition of specimens. He gave generously for the publications of the results of the various expeditions to Central America. To him the Museum owes in greater part the publication of the six folio volumes of its Memoirs and the following Papers: v. 1, nos. 1, 3, and 7; v. 2; v. 4, nos. 1, 2, and 3; v. 6, no. 2; v. 7; and v. 9, all of which contain material pertaining to the Maya field.

As the grandson of Nathaniel Bowditch his mind ran to mathematics and his special interest in Central America was the study of the hieroglyphic inscriptions. His pioneer work in this field was second only to that of Goodman and Förstemann. His acute mind established many facts hitherto unknown concerning the Maya hieroglyphic writing. His unbiased opinion, strengthened by most painstaking study, was brought to bear on the many unsettled problems of the hieroglyphic system. The results of his investigations are summed up in his writings, a list of which is given at the end of this paper. Special mention should be made of his book, *The Numeration, Calendar Systems, and Astronomical Knowledge of the Mayas*. This work was a landmark in the study of the Central American writing and served to focus attention on this subject as no other book had done. His mental agility in working out the dates of the inscriptions and his feats of rapid calculation, often done without the aid of pencil and paper, were always received with wonder and admiration by his friends and

colleagues in this study. His writings were almost exclusively technical in nature and served as guides to the specialist on the way to a complete elucidation of the hieroglyphic writing.

Mr. Bowditch did not read German well and he secured the translation of practically the entire works of Seler, Förstemann, Schellhas, and other German writers in this field. Several of these translations have been published (*P. M. Papers*, v. 4, nos. 1 and 2, and *Bulletin 28* of the Bureau of American Ethnology). The other translations have been deposited in the library of the Peabody Museum. His translation from the Spanish of the *Relación* of Landa and that of Avendaño represent another line which his acute mind took in furthering the advance of knowledge of the Central American field.

Another activity of Mr. Bowditch in Maya studies was the collection of works and documents covering this area. He built up gradually one of the best working libraries on this subject, and afterwards gave it to the Museum. He had the Nuttall Codex copied and published, the Laud Codex in the British Museum copied, and, at the time of his death, he was having prepared a copy of the Sahagun manuscript in Florence with its many colored illustrations. Mr. William Gates kindly allowed Mr. Bowditch to purchase duplicate sets of the photographic reproductions of over fifty thousand pages of manuscripts and rare books on Central America and Mexico. This comprises practically everything in manuscript form now extant on the languages of Central America and much of the material on Mexican linguistics. These reproductions have been bound and given to the Museum. Mr. Bowditch himself reproduced the various manuscripts which he had given to the Museum as well as several which are in other collections.

No field of activity was overlooked. He became the sponsor of several Fellowships. The first Fellowship in American Archaeology of the Archaeological Institute of America as well as the Central American Fellowship of the Peabody Museum were given by him. He was in great part responsible for the establishment of the Division of Anthropology in Harvard University and an Instructorship in Central American Archaeology was first established by him.

Instruction in this subject has been carried on by Harvard since 1905.

As one of the Founders of the American Anthropological Association, Mr. Bowditch was a generous supporter of the cause of Anthropology in America. His ready response could always be depended upon for overcoming deficits and for advice. There is perhaps no other instance in American Anthropology where an effort in one field of interest has been so long continued, so intense, and so productive of results. His monument is the Central American collections in the Peabody Museum, its Maya publications, and its remarkable collection of books and manuscripts on Middle America. This monument will continue to increase in size as his generous interest in the Museum will be reflected in future activities in the Maya field.

Mr. Bowditch was a man of very strong personality. He tried to carry out the letter of the law and expected others to do so. Forceful but modest, always with opinions but willing to reason, wrathful before underhandedness but just to all, Mr. Bowditch will be remembered by his colleagues as one of the greatest friends of the science and one who tried to uphold its highest traditions.

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